## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) Composite material with a specific density in the range of 0.8 $g/cm^3$ to 1.2 $g/cm^3$, comprising:

one or more grains of a non-metallic inorganic material with a specific surface area in the range of 10,000 $m^2/m^3$ to 1,000,000 $m^2/m^3$, having a porosity in the range of 10% to 80% wherein at least 50% of the pores have a pore size in the range of 0.1 μm to 1000 μm, and wherein more than 50% of the grains have a grain size in the range of 0.1 mm to 50 mm; and

one or more plastics particles with a specific density in the range of 0.6 $g/cm^3$ to 1.2 $g/cm^3$, and a specific surface area in the range of 50 $m^2/m^3$ to 1000 $m^2/m^3$, wherein more than 50% of the plastics particles have a particle size in the range of 0.01 mm to 100 mm.

2. (Previously Presented) The composite material according to claim 1, wherein the non-metallic inorganic material has a specific surface area in the range of 25,000 $m^2/m^3$ to 500,000 $m^2/m^3$.

3. (Previously Presented) The composite material according to claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of non-metallic inorganic material to plastics particles lies in the range of 15:85 to 85:15.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of carrying bacteria comprising:

contacting the bacteria with ~~Use of~~ the composite material according to claim 1, such that the composite material carries bacteria ~~as bacteria carrier material~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 4, wherein bacteria is carried in plants for water treatment.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~use~~ method according to claim 4, wherein the specific density of the composite material corresponds to the specific density of the surrounding material.

7. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing the composite material according to claim 1, comprising:

mixing the grains of non-metallic inorganic material with the plastics particles;

filling the mixture into a mould;

melting the surface of the plastics particles~~; and optionally pressing together the plastics particles having a melted surface with the grains of the non-metallic inorganic material either simultaneously with or following melting the surface of the plastics particles~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 7, comprising adding a plastics powder having a grain size in the range of 0.2 mm to 1.5 mm, a specific density in the range of 0.6g/cm$^3$ to 1.2g/cm$^3$ and having a melting point not more than 10% above that of the plastics particles and not more than 30% below that of the plastics particles ~~made from a material identical to or similar to the material of the plastics particles~~, wherein the plastics powder is added before melting the surface of the plastics particles.

9. (New) The method according to claim 7, comprising pressing together the plastics particles having a melted surface with the grains of the non-metallic inorganic material either simultaneously with or following melting the surface of the plastics particles

10. (New) A method for the biological treatment of water, comprising treating water with a composite material according to claim 1, wherein the composite material is a bacteria carrier material.

11. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the water is treated in a plant.

12. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the water is treated in a sewage treatment plant, a bioreactor or a fermentation reactor.

13. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the water is treated in a sewage treatment plant.

14. (New) The method according to claim 10, wherein the specific density of the composite material corresponds to the specific density of a surrounding material.